REMARKS

Claims 2-6, 8-10, 16-22 are pending in this application.

Claims 2, 3, 8, 16-20 are amended for clarity. Support for the amendments to claims 16-18 is found throughout the specification, and in particular, in paragraphs [0049] – [0053] and FIGS. 2 – 4. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8-10, 16-20 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,321,236 issued to Zollinger et al. (hereinafter called Zollinger). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claim 16 recites "upon receipt of the second reply, modifying the data element stored in the client computer prior to executing the common task; modifying the data element stored in the client computer as part of executing the common task to create a modified data element; and modifying the selected data element on the shared storage medium based on the modified data element".

Claim 17 recites "modify the data element to create a modified data element; and modify the selected data element on the shared storage medium based on the modified data element".

In contrast, Zollinger teaches away from claims 16 and 17. Zollinger teaches that data stored on a server can be modified by applications running on the server 68 (col. 6, lines 46-53; col. 7, lines 60-63; FIG. 1). Zollinger also teaches that a client may modify database tables stored locally at the client independently of a server update (col. 7, lines 43-46). However, Zollinger expressly indicates that data on the server is not modified based on data modified by the client, and as a result that such client data modifications can be lost. In Zollinger, if changes are made to the client copy of the database tables by the client, the changes will not be propagated back to the original table managed on the server computer and could actually be lost when update instructions are received by one of the clients 48a – 48n (Fig. 1; and col. 7, lines 43-50).

Moreover, Zollinger expressly disallows modifications of data on the server based on data modified by the client. In particular, Zollinger states that a client's copy of the original data

store or elements thereof such as a database table are in one respect read-only copies since any changes made by the client will not be distributed back to the original (col. 1, lines 43-45). For these reasons, Zollinger does not teach or suggest "upon receipt of the second reply, modifying the data element stored in the client computer prior to executing the common task; modifying the data element stored in the client computer as part of executing the common task to create a modified data element; and modifying the selected data element on the shared storage medium based on the modified data element" as disclosed in claim 16, and "modify the data element to create a modified data element; and modify the selected data element on the shared storage medium based on the modified data element" as disclosed in claim 17.

Claim 18 recites "receiving a modified data element corresponding to the selected data element from the client; and upon receipt of the modified data element from the client, modifying the version number associated with the selected data element in the master list".

Zollinger teaches that data on the server is not modified based on data modified by the client (col. 7, lines 43-50; col. 1, lines 43-49). Since data on the server is not modified based on client data modifications, there is no reason for a "version number associated with the selected data element in the master list", and therefore Zollinger does not teach or suggest this claim limitation.

Zollinger discloses that a client receives a client copy of a database table having a particular version identifier and at some later time the client reconnects with the server to request synchronization of the client copy of the database table to make it current with the original database table on the server (col. 3, lines 51-56). Therefore, updates of the copy of the database table are performed merely to the copy of the database table without modifying the original database table. As a consequence, Zollinger cannot possibly teach or suggest "upon receipt of the modified data element from the client, modifying the version number associated with the selected data element in the master list".

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8-10, 19 and 22 depend directly or ultimately on claims 16-18. Consequently, claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8-10, 19 and 22 are believed patentable for the same reasons provided above. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 4 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zollinger in view of US Patent No. 5,574,953 issued to Rust et al (hereinafter called Rust). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claims 4 and 21 depend directly or ultimately on claims 16 and 17 and in view of the above reasons provided for claims 16 and 17, claims 4 and 21 are now believed to be patentable over Zollinger et al. in view of Rust et al. The Applicant requests the reconsideration of the rejection.

In addition, Rust teaches a data compression and decompression method for storing compressed data in non-contiguous memory (col. 3, lines 30-32).

In view of the above, a reconsideration of the rejections of claims 2-6, 8-10, 16-22 is respectfully requested. It is believed that claims 2-6, 8-10, 16-22 are allowable over the prior art and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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